

The following notes were taken for a paper written for the course on Philosophy in 2000 (MDiv Program at CITS, Instructor: Dr. William Pankey). Since a photocopy of the submitted handwritten final manuscript was not made, the notes below are digitized for reference as the submitted draft seems to have been lost. [Some of the quick jots are no longer legible to the author himself; the sources referred to in the roughly marked page numbers also cannot be traced now. "fn" refers to "footnote" which start at 54]. The scanned copy of the notebook is available at [here](#).

"....it is the biblical view of God as creator which is the basis of the conviction that God is complete....." 148ff

Ockham A.157.. ...the created world is sheer fact, utterly contingent on God's will with no metaphysical ground of necessity on which to construct a demonstration philosophically of with which theology must cohere. - rejects causality, reality of common notions of specific forms present in things...

Hume does not deny causality - 190

A166. Deity not wholly excluded

Kant.

1. The self is phenomena
2. Whatever underlies us, objects, and space and time themselves is utterly unknowable.

Epistemological

When the senses are jettisoned as invalid--the categories become void, the temptation then is to jettison the categories as well and ending up in negations (even the "self" as phenomena is jettisoned for the concept of infinity but cannot be jettisoned totally for the concept of rationality"

The Buddhist anatta is a more call for denial of individual selves. It is not a matter of surprise that the Buddhists vote for non-rationality and object the use of reason landing themselves in self-contradiction.

Paradoxes occur when rational concepts (for reasonable judging) are confused with empirical concepts (for experiencing).

e.g. subjectivity vs objectivity

unity vs diversity

immutability vs motion

causality vs freedom

Paradoxes occur when empirical concepts are confused with empirical data

e.g. infinite, spirit etc vs finite entities

Paradoxes occur when empirical concepts are confused under other empirical concepts

e.g. motion vs position

The complementary work of rational concepts and empirical concepts

1. Rational concepts are concerned with Truth. Empirical concepts with data

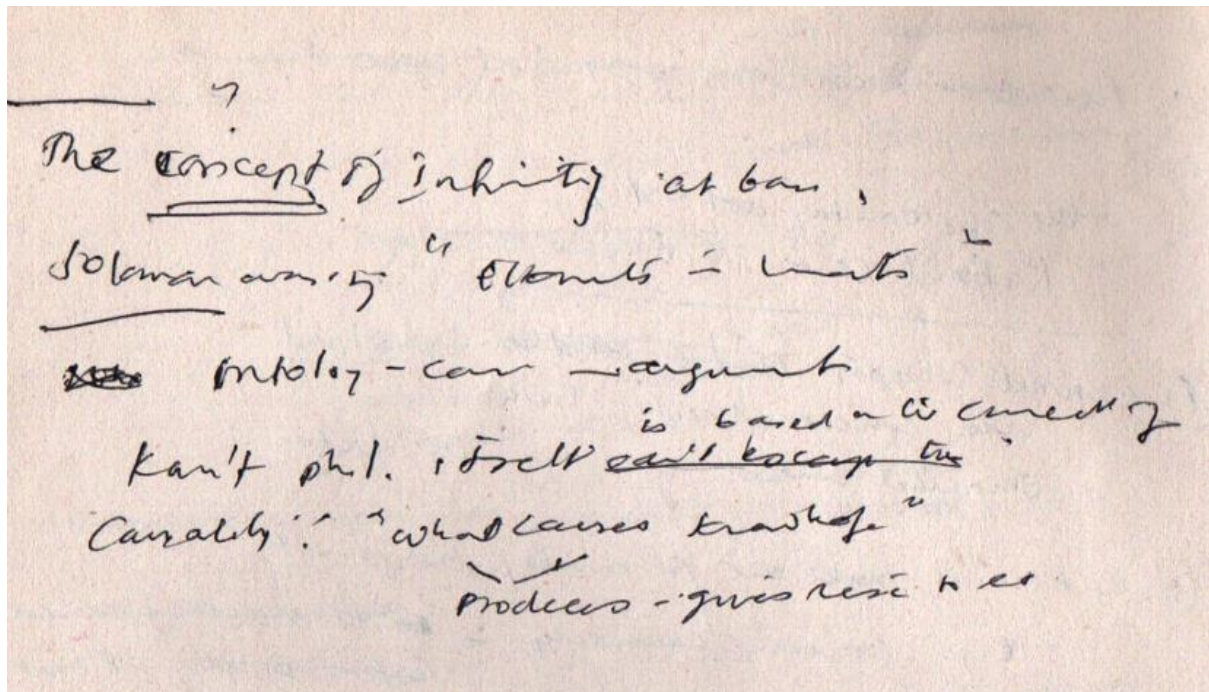
2. Rational concepts are for making judgment.

e.g. concerning causality. something can't be the cause of and the effect of another thing at the same time etc.; perception of triangle cannot be square

Not that causality as creation of the categories is false but the categories of causality help us recognize/understand

The concept of infinity at birth: Solomon: "eternity in their hearts"

Kantian philosophy itself is based on the concept of causality: "what causes knowledge" produces - gives rise to etc.



for its categories to organize by the sensibilities (or sources). We can this man's stay progress in science going step by step in our empirical inquiries concerning material objects. Rational cosmology arises only when reason seeks to go beyond the reach of empirical inquiries, and to ask about the extent of the universe as a whole in space and time, about the ultimate constituents of material objects, whether freedom is possible, and whether there is more than contingent beings. It then seeks to use the categories of understanding without empirical data. This is a mistake since the categories are principles or rules for the organization of data supplied by the senses. When we use the categories of understanding to tell us the ultimate basis for empirical objects we study in the sciences, our reason gets itself into contradictions. If we recognize that the categories are to be employed solely to organize experience, then we will see that rational cosmology is impossible. We see that reason is limited and that it has no power to go beyond all possible experience to the ultimate ground of experience. (fn.54. Phil.. for. p. 213)

Thus is the problem of reason posed by the monists (Parmenides, Zeno, Advaintists) resolved. When the forms and concepts of understanding are tried to be rationally explained and understood, no other means and categories are left whereby they may be understood--this

results in a rebound that ends up in paradoxes or total negation of the empirical or the synthetic a priori since the laws of logic (reason) themselves cannot be denied without affirming them so the empirical is jettisoned.

(a set of infinity is understood but not the extent of universe beyond sets)

Parmenides' arguments are dismissible -- He confuses existent entities with existence itself. And his conclusion of reality as round, finite, and motionless One is itself irrational--how can the finite be perceived (or conceived) apart from space-time--explicitly, duality is already assumed.

Thus when the senses are jettisoned as false, the categories become void, the result being more negations--and no fruitful understanding. And so Sankaracharya himself acknowledges: *"...the self is free from all adventitious attributes.... It is free from generic and specific attributes.... It is devoid of all action.... It being free from qualities. Therefore it baffles all verbal description."* (fn55. Mand. p.32).

The negations -- infinity, immutability--other way of saying not limited by space-time, not cause-effect...

Zeno's paradoxes are real paradoxes because reason now finally attempts to know and understand the forms space-time itself, [fn56. cf. Daniel Kolak and David Goloff, p.79. Concerning the refined paradox of Zeno, "Asking where our shrinking Zeno is, is to ask where the points of space are and, ultimately, to inquire into the deeply mysterious question of what space is made of."] but how can it without some other form or category whereby it may understand it?

Reason has reached its limits and can press no further. To deny the senses and the categories of understanding is to end up in negations. For every positive element would assume the forms and concepts of understanding. But where all is negation there is no positive understanding--it is void. Even the Advaitins are reluctant from calling their Infinite (Brahman) or Reality as One. It is Non-dual, they say, which would be a more accurate negation than calling the Infinite One [fn57. There can be only one Infinite, since the existence of the one annuls the existence of the other] which is used of finite entities. And devastatingly, these negations are all applied to reality which, at the dispense of all the categories of the mind, cannot be understandable to the mind any longer. The understanding is void, since the categories are unemployed and the senses denied. This is the most devastating form of agnosticism--negation.

REASON AND REVELATION

The Bible begins with the sentence "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." 5 elements are already involved here:

1. A beginning
2. A non-cosmo-noumena - GOD "Elohim"
3. An action by the "Infinite" One -- "Created"

4. A "miracle" - world out of "nothing"
5. Cosmos - space-time-matter

The rest of the chapter too has many interesting "revelations" but for the purpose of the paper we'll look into 4 of the above 5 elements.

1. A Beginning. While Reason attempted to go beyond this point, it couldn't arrive at any point but regressed in its infinity. Revelation speaks of a beginning which Reason must accept as "must be" since an infinite regress of the past would make the present phenomena impossible. But Reason is perplexed because if it desires to enquire even backward: what was there before the beginning?
2. God-The Supra-Cosmo-Noumena. The introduction of this "Being" is more complex to Reason -- not just because this "Being" is an "wholly other" noumena, but also because Reason itself has no/does not possess any specific categories whereby it may apprehend it. But the characteristics of Reason as being infinite, immutable, abstract, and a unity makes it reasonable to understand this supra-cosmo-noumena as being the infinite, immutable, abstract (spiritual), unity beyond the cosmo-noumena. The understanding is not conceptual (even the word "beyond" is not conceptual) but is reasonable.

It is not reached by reason, but its understanding by revelation is made possible by the characteristics of Reason itself.

3. An Action by the Infinite. Reason has no way (no categories by which it may) understand this phrase. How can an Infinite act--and if He acted where would He act - - He Himself being Infinite cancels anything (space) as being above or as containing Him? And Him being eternal and action involving time -- How does action apply to Him? The conceptual limits of Reason are obvious -- The forms and concepts do not allow for an Infinite "Being". But it doesn't still nullify the phrase, since a rational abstraction is still possible in reason itself. But if all that was was "Infinite" how did the finite come into existence?
4. Out of nothing. This is even more inconceivable by Reason. Neither its synthetic a priori concepts nor the empirical data which it processes validate the statement. But Reason understands that the universe cannot be eternal -- for once it is claimed to be eternal -- everything linked to time (Birth, changes, motions, actions) must be rejected and denied as illusions. And still Reason would enquire--how did these illusions come to be? Thus the cosmos cannot be claimed to be eternal. [fn58. Also if it were eternal, in the sense of timelessness, the phenomena of time (and its inseparable co-space) must be rejected. If it were timeless it couldn't have emerged into time for that motion involves time (though it be same). cf. "Time..." by Paul Davies, p.85]. But if it had to have a beginning, it must not have existed before that beginning-- that is to say, before the beginning it must not be -- And so the beginning would be its emergence "out of nothing" -- "nothing" now is not a concept but a rational modality supposition. And

for tis coming out of nothing must involve an external Cause since it cannot be self-caused [fn59. To be self-caused means to exist before bringing itself into existence which is preponderous.] and cannot be uncaused (or eternal) as well.

Thus, it is understood that the terms "Infinity" "Immutability" (as involving action and motion) and "out of nothing" cannot be conceptual terms but are negative terms. Here "Infinity" "Immutability" "abstraction" and "unity" are not applied for the cosmos-noumena as the Advaintins did, but to an external supra-non-cosmo-noumena-God Himself. Reason cannot understand this "wholly other Noumena" conceptually not only because it has no "infinite categories" to understand Him but because its "finite categories" can only understand this Being relationally. [fn60. "Before" itself is a phenomenalistical term and still reflects the limits of Reason.. cp. Allen, "It is divine action that establishes a relation in which we have some knowledge of God. We know that God is full and complete from the act of creation. But we do not comprehend that fullness or completeness, that is, what God is in essence, apart from the act whereby God establishes a relation. We know God, therefore, not in essence but only in relation to us. It is because God makes a world and relates to us in other ways that we gain some understanding of deity." p.11] That is, not when He acted "before" space-time but when He acts in space-time--and that knowledge would be phenomenalistical even as other cosmo-phenomena are perceived.

Thus anything [fn62. e.g. the "mind" of God, the "Being" of God... The problem of evil aspires to know the mind of God (it cannot disprove the existence of God absolutely) which is an impossibility--as a matter of fact, the problem of evil cannot even be stated properly (i.e., removed from phenomenalistical)].

RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

According to Hunnex, "Religious language may be (1) informative, (2) moral, (3) symbolic, (4) existential, (5) emotive, or any combination of these." [fn.63. *Charts of Philosophy*, p.34]

We may shrink these five into 3:

1. Negational. As we have seen when talking about God as being above our conceptualities.
"Theologians also speak of God with negations when they say that God's goodness, power, and wisdom are not the goodness, power, and wisdom of created realities because they are perfect and without any limits" [fn.64. *Philosophy for ...* p.87]

The terms "infinite" "immutable" and even "Spirit" (invisible-immaterial) are also negational terms.

2. Phenomenalistical. This is talk of God in relation to us by His actions. Since by nature of their (the actions)...relational they are understood and talked of phenomenalistically.

"The language of scripture is an accomodation to our limited capacities." [fn.65. *Phil. for...* p.34]

The unity of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit "is beyond the concepts we use to characterize the unity of people and things. Our understanding of God arises from our reflections on God's operations or actions (*energeia*) by which God relates to us. ... Mystery arises then, not because we cannot understand various things about God's nature, such as that God is Creator and Redeemer, but that God is One in all the diversity of divine actions. It is rather that we have no concepts or models which enable us to understand the way God is united in all the diversity of divine actions, or the way God is One." [fn.66. *Phil for.* 101].

Phenomenalistic language doesn't attempt to explain and inform of God as He-is-in-Himself but speaks of Him as He is and acts in relation to us. The "understanding arises from our reflection on God's operations or actions by which God relates to us." The language is phenomenalistic because the knowledge is phenomenalistic. As a matter of fact, the language of scripture is "too" phenomenalistic that it is down-to-earth and down-to-man language. [fn67. e.g. The verse "For he maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good" (Mt.5:45) is a down-to-earth down-to-man language and not a up-on-a-space-craft or down-to-man-with-telescope language.] Also....phenomenalistic symbols are used in the scriptures).

3. Existential. While the negational language and the phenomenalistical language may be understood by any man, the existential meaning of an existential talk of God and one's relation to or experience of Him cannot be understood by one unfamiliar with or unacquainted with the experience. This language is a reflection of a deep personal experience and significance. And as expressing an experience with the "wholly other" which is un-understandable by one who hasn't had that experience--This language is the scriptural mystical language and this knowledge is not possible apart from the action of the Holy Spirit in us and in relation to us personally. [fn68. cp. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1Cor.2:14)

REASON AND REVELATION

The Revelation must not in any [way] conflict with Reason but must be open to falsification. We have seen that Reason cannot basically falsify the creation account without itself getting into absurdity.

If Reason were let alone, surely great agnosticism would be arrived at. But agnosticism cannot be taken for granted by one aspiring to know the truth. When he encounters a message of Revelation, he must be able to rationally evaluate the evidences. This ... produce faith. For faith is an act of the will and not related to reason and as such irrational. Not that it has no reason to back it up but that it is free from Reason itself. The greatest hindrance to knowledge is a made-up mind.

We know God only as He relates to us and we talk of Him negatively when we say He is not like His creation, talk phenomenally when talking of His phenomenal acts, and talk of Him existentially when talking of His personal relation to and significance for us and of our personal relation to Him. Religious language as such is reasonable to those who are acquainted with the terms--its existential aspect being understandable only to those who are acquainted with the experience. It is reasonable and in keeping with the laws of logic.

APPENDIX A

The Problem of Evil

Cannot be stated beyond the forms of space-time "He would not allow." The only apparent proof of atheism.[fn.69. *Hand.. Apologetics*, p.122]

The Upanishads get rid of this problem of evil altogether by negating the existence of cause and effect.

Causality presupposes difference [fn.70 *Mand...* p.201. F.N.2, *Mand.* p.217. (IV.78)] and so is incompatible to the doctrine of non-dualism.

"The Shruti negates the existence of good and evil in the following passage [fn.72 *Brahmopanishad VI*]. The law of causation operates on us only so long as we distinguish ourselves as subjects from objects of thought or activity." [Footnote p.4. to *Brahmopanishad VI*.]

Thus, in a non-dual, monistic view of Reality evil or good cannot be Real. The monistic Reality is motionless, immutable, and one (no objectivity). Good and evil become either illusive phenomena or phenomena as relative reality produced by an ineffable *Maya* - which itself is a catchword for describing the indescribable.

But those who argue for the problem of evil, already assume the existence of evil and with that of a pluralistic Reality, of the existence of causality, and with that of the existence of space and time. For if they opted for a monistic universe--the problem of evil would disappear. And for a pluralistic option the problem of Reason above the problem of evil must be a more crucial one. For if reason were false (which could not be since the falsity would be discerned by the application of Reason itself) the argument for the problem of evil would become invalid. But if reason were right and reliable then he has either of the two alternatives when getting into metaphysics:

1. Opt for monism by jettisoning of the senses and experience [fn.73....anything that deals with the problem of evil must deal with Reality either as monistic or as pluralistic]
2. Accept Kantian phenomenalism and arrive at total agnosticism concerning anything beyond space-time and this is the impossibility of metaphysics, and God and His ways.

At this juncture, however, his reason must be able to tell him that the cosmo-reality can neither be eternal or self-caused (for if it were eternal (as being infinite time) it could not

come to the present because of the infinite regression of the past and if it were eternal (as being timeless) the phenomenon of time must be rejected (and with that the phenomena of space to which time is inseparably linked) and opt for either nihilism (or nothingness) which is impossible since the one doing the argument exists, or for monism.

Secondly, the quality of eternity (as being timeless) doesn't allow for a reversion into or emergence into time, since both of the above motions take at least some time, as we have already seen in Ch.IV.

Reality as being self-caused is self-contradictory for that presupposes the existence of Reality before the causation of itself.

But if reality were neither non-dual nor eternal nor self-caused then it should have a beginning. Here Reason must take aid of Revelation and investigate its claims. It must also be open to the other rational arguments for the existence of God.

Agnosticism cannot be had as a way of living; agnosticism is not equivalent to atheism [fn.74. which is fallacious since the absolute negation of an Infinite being is stated by a finite being, which is impossible unless the one negating himself possesses infinite knowledge].

The problem of evil, thus by affirming the existence of evil falls into the problem of Reason and Reality ending up in sheer agnosticism concerning metaphysics unless Revelation comes to its aid.

Secondly, the problem of evil is not a question adequately stated at all. Since in stating it the forms and categories of our mind are imposed on the mind of God Himself.

"If God foreknew that..." is an imposition of time on God. But as a matter of fact, there can be no conceptual understanding apart from the forms of space and time. The only way we put a distinction between God and the cosmos is by negation.

A space-time answer cannot be real at all since God is not (to be God must not be) in space-time. How He thinks is not known to us since think, plan etc to us are inseparable from space-time. And the question cannot be stated from His point of view, evidently. And since the question cannot be stated, the answer cannot be given. Or I quote Wittgenstein:

"When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words.

The riddle does not exist.

If a question can be framed at all, it is also possible to answer it.

Skepticism is not irrefutable, but obviously nonsensical, when it tries to raise doubts where no questions can be asked.

For doubt can exist only where a question exists, a question only where an answer exists, and an answer only where something can be said"

and then

"What we cannot speak about we must consign to silence." [fn.75. Ludwig Wittgenstein *On Death and the Mystical*. No.6.5, 6.5.1, & 7]

